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ABSTRACT

National Issues Forums (NIFs) were conducted for adult basic education (ABE) students in a Pennsylvania adult education and job training center. The forums provide a process of sharing thoughts and opinions about areas of pressing national concerns in an open exchange of everyone's opinion. After instructors participated in NIFs, they developed a curriculum and organized two forums aimed at including at least 10 ABE students. The two forums covered the boundaries of free speech and the United States' role in the world. Seventeen ABE students participated in the forums along with nonstudents. The activity increased the higher-level thinking skills of the ABE students and enhanced their self-esteem and empowerment. Student reactions were positive. (The document includes 12 appendixes of project materials that contain the following: a summary of NIF activities for ABE students, suggested resources, pre- and post-forum ballot, news article, student questionnaire, publicity, NIF materials, including a sample moderator guide, a list of 1991-92 NIF issues, and a NIF order form.) (KC)

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ED353384

National Issues Forums in an ABE Setting

Final Report

by

Carol Molek, Project Director

91-92

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June 30, 1992

Tuscarora Intermediate Unit
Adult Education and Job Training Center
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We also extend gratitude to PDE Special Projects Advisor, Dan Partin, for his technical assistance and guidance. Funding for "National Issues Forums in an ABE Setting" has allowed us to enhance and develop our programming and delivery of much needed services to our area's adults.

As always we value the support of the Tuscarora Intermediate Unit Board and our Executive Director, Dr. Dale Heller. The Intermediate Unit continues to recognize our unique contribution to the total organization.

A special thanks also goes to Dehra Shafer, Head of Educational Services, of WPSX Pennsylvania State University for her collaboration on this project and her motivating influence promoting the NIF experience for our students. Both she and Lauri Forlizzi provided valuable technical assistance that greatly supported this effort.

Without the team effort of our ABE instructional staff, this project could not have succeeded. Special appreciation goes to Kelly Barron and Randy Varner for being excellent moderators and promoting the value of NIF's with their students. In addition, we acknowledge our students for demonstrating their competency in dealing with issues of national concern and sharing their opinions with us.

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Abstract

Title: National Issues Forums in an ABE Setting

Director: Carol Molek
Address: TIU Adult Education and Job Training Center
1020 Belle Vernon Avenue
Lewistown, PA 17044 **Phone No.** 717-248-4942
Federal Funding: $4,170

Duration of Project:
From: 7/1/91 **To:** 6/30/92 **No. of Months:** 12

Objectives:

-to introduce National Issues Forums concept to all Adult Basic Education students through mini forum activities developed in a National Issues Forums component to our ABE curriculum
-to hold 2 student National Issues Forums
-to involve 10 Adult Basic Education students in a community National Issues Forums
-to document and disseminate this project statewide as a model for National Issues Forums for Adult Basic Education students

Description:

Through this project we incorporated the National Issues Forums concept into our Adult Basic Education curriculum. The National Issues Forums is a process of sharing thoughts and opinions about areas of pressing national concern in an open exchange of everyone's opinion. This activity increased the higher level thinking skills of our students and skills obtained are transferable. Self esteem and empowerment of students were also enhanced.

Target Audience:

All Adult Basic Education students enrolled at the TIU Adult Education and Job Training Center for the duration of this project.

Product:

Final report including the National Issues Forums activities component for adoption statewide.

Method of Evaluation:

Evaluation was based on successfully:

-developing a National Issues Forums component for our Adult Basic Education curriculum
-introducing National Issues Forums to our students utilizing mini forums
-operating 2 student forums
-involving 10 students in a community forum
-documenting this project for statewise dissemination

National Issues Forums in an ABE Setting

Introduction

"National Issues Forums in an ABE Setting" addressed priority H.1. - a small grant to address local needs. This special demonstration project enhanced our Adult Basic Education (ABE) program and will also serve as a model for others in the state who see the benefits of incorporating National Issues Forum activities into their curriculum.

The National Issues Forums are sponsored each year by the Kettering Foundation. The Forums are a descendent of the oldest and most characteristic political institution in America, the town meeting. Today our complex democratic government is still dependent on the community being involved. The Forums are one tool of the democratic process.

Each year the National Issues Forums convenors identify three issues of pressing national concern for discussion in the Forums and study circles. Books are prepared on two levels: for the general public and an abridged version with a lower reading level.

The books and other materials available are used in preparation for the Forums. Participants read the materials and analyze the choices that are presented. The choices require talking through a topic and not just about it. During the Forums participants share their feelings and opinions while learning to be open to others who may have very different viewpoints. The goal is to explore the issue, not to persuade or advocate. Participants are not expected to agree but only to respect others' opinions.

Our plan for this project was to introduce the National Issues Forums to our ABE students and to involve them in this process. Participating in the National Issues Forums process is an invaluable critical thinking skills exercise for our students. This activity in higher level thinking increases potential for transferring these skills to their ABE studies and other areas of their lives.

ABE students were empowered by their involvement in National Issues Forums. The essence of the forums is that each participant's opinion is as important as anyone elses. Therefore the Forums become a self esteem builder. Improving self esteem in our adult students is an essential effort in creating receptive learners. Just as lack of child care or transportation are barriers to self improvement, so is a lack of self esteem. Once a student develops some self confidence and a feeling of self worth learning occurs more naturally. Participation in NIF's is a perfect exercise in honoring and promoting the value of each individual.

The time frame for the project follows:

Time Schedule - 7/1/91 - 6/30/92

July, August - Development of the National Issues Forums component for the Adult Basic Education curriculum

September - June - utilizing and revising this curriculum

November and May - operating 2 student forums

April - community forum with ABE students participating

June - final report

The project director was Carol Molek. Ms. Molek directs programs at the TIU Adult Education and Job Training Center. Ms. Molek has over eight years experience coordinating adult programs

for the Intermediate Unit and developing curriculum. Ms. Molek directed the project, supervised the other personnel involved, was responsible for maintaining the planned time frame, recruited program participants and reported to and communicated with the Department. All Adult Center ABE/GED instructors assisted in the project.

The audience benefiting from the project are our ABE students of this project year and for the future. Participation in NIF activities has greatly enhanced their self esteem and classroom performance. The larger audience to benefit from the program are other ABE practitioners in the state who would like to give their students a similar opportunity.

Permanent copies of this report can be obtained from:

Division of Adult Basic and Literacy Education Programs
Pennsylvania Department of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

and

AdvanceE
Pennsylvania Department of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

"National Issues Forums in an ABE Setting" was administered by the Tuscarora Intermediate Unit No. 11. The TIU is a local education agency which provides educational and management

services to 9 school districts and 3 area vocational technical schools in Fulton, Huntingdon, Juniata, and Mifflin Counties.

The Intermediate Unit operates or oversees all Adult Center programs at the TIU Adult Education and Job Training Center. Center programs have included 306/321 ABE and GED programs; ACT 143 Program; the GED Alumni Association; various JTPA Programs; Carl Perkins project for single parents and displaced homemakers and thirty 310/353 special projects.

"National Issues Forums in an ABE Setting" was based at the TIU Adult Education and Job Training Center at the Juniata-Mifflin Area Vocational Technical School in Lewistown, Mifflin County. The Adult Center is the home of a wide variety of adult education programs meeting the needs of adults in Juniata and Mifflin counties. February '92 marked the Adult Center's 8th year of successful operation.

Statement of Problem

"National Issues Forums in an ABE Setting" was designed to address several problem areas for our students. One problem is our students' general lack of involvement in the community. In particular, participation in the NIF process was a new and exciting opportunity for many of our ABE students. Although some were intimidated by the idea, our small group NIF's eased many of our students into a new realm of self expression and participation in the democratic process. So many of our ABE students are completely on the outside of mainstream community life. Their input is not often solicited and they feel they are powerless and invisible members of our society. The NIF experience assisted our students in achieving new feelings of importance and self worth.

Through work with our local Adult Literacy Coalition we also sponsored two community National Issues Forums this year. Our goal was to have ABE students become part of the larger Community Forum. The introduction and practice with Forums that this project provided gave our students the confidence and experience they needed to join the Community Forum. For most of our students this became a totally unique experience. Our students very often are isolated from the mainstream community. Involvement in a Community National Issues Forum was a major step in creating a new position for themselves within the community: a new position as participating, concerned, democratic citizens.

The other problem which the NIF project helped to address was the need for new instructional approaches to teaching critical

thinking and abstract analysis. Preparation for NIF participation created a new exercise in thinking for our students. The NIF concept is abstract and the issues are difficult for world leaders to address. By presenting these challenges to our students, we helped to develop their thinking skills to new levels.

Goals and Objectives

The goal of "National Issues Forums in an ABE Setting" was to promote higher level thinking skills and self expression in our ABE students while involving them with a group problem solving experience.

Objectives were:

- to introduce the National Issues Forums concept to all ABE students in our Center throughout the '91 - '92 year providing mini-forum experiences for all.

- one purpose of the students' involvement in the NIF process will be enhancement of students' critical thinking skills, organizational skills, communication skills, and human relations skills. Enhancement of these skills will 1) improve performance in students' ABE studies and 2) improve retention by fostering commitment and motivation.

- to organize 2 student National Issues Forums, one in the fall and one in the spring.

- to involve at least 10 ABE students in a Community National Issues Forum.

- to document this process through a final report which can then be used statewide for a model of National Issues Forums for ABE students.

Procedures

The general design for "National Issues Forums in an ABE Setting" involved three steps.

The first step was to work with instructors to plan the introduction of National Issues Forums to students and how to incorporate exercises at appropriate places within the curriculum. A presentation on the National Issues Forums experience was prepared and used with all ABE students.

All staff participated in an NIF so that they would have first hand knowledge of what we would be asking of our students. Our staff has three trained moderators. In addition, two newer staff members became very enthusiastic about NIF and trained as moderators. Instructors learned techniques and procedures to motivate students to participate in the Forums.

The second step was to organize, publicize, and implement several student National Issues Forums. This step was done by the staff with input from students. The abridged editions of National Issues Forums books were used as teaching tools in preparation for the Forums. Reading skills were thus developed and enhanced. Vocabulary was increased with use of the materials. Students had several exposures to NIF exercises in order to help them grasp this difficult abstraction and make it more concrete. Specific training to prepare students for NIF was compatible and supplemental to standard ABE curriculum. Some preparatory exercises included:

- building inferences through cartoons and pictures
- making inferences through graphs and charts

- generating questions to expand higher order thinking skills
- looking at a situation, defining the problem and finding solutions
- mapping information to explain choices
- organizing information to look at the pros and cons
- providing students with guidance in silent reading
- simplifying choices
- simplifying statistics

Methods for the project were in-service training of staff on incorporating National Issues Forums concepts and materials into the curriculum. Our trained moderators on staff shared their expertise with additional staff members. Our project director worked with staff to develop curriculum and activities to prepare our students for participation in NIF's. Lecture and discussion with students on National Issues Forums were held. National Issues Forums for students were facilitated by moderators. The Kettering Foundations publication, "Building Moderator Skills," was used to train staff. It is an excellent, explicit tool for training moderators for NIF. It is also very appropriate because its content is transferable to many other areas of communication skills. Students learned much about group communication by following Kettering's moderator's techniques.

Also utilized was a Resource Kit developed and used by Shirley Georgi and Jill Loegering in basic classes in Minnesota. The materials are appropriate for low level students in classes or in a tutoring setting. We also used the NIF starter video tapes which are

extremely helpful in clarifying issues and approaches for our students.

The third step planned was to involve at least 10 ABE students in a Community National Issues Forums in the spring. Instead, ABE students participated in two Community Forums, one in November and one in May. Along with the local Adult Literacy Coalition, ABE students helped to organize and participate in these public events.

A project such as this is definitely a team effort and everyone on our staff participated. In addition, we found this to be an excellent program to eliminate arbitrary student-teacher roles. The students were very much a part of the team reflecting the democratic backbone of NIFs. As an equalizer, the Forums program did much to generate enthusiasm and motivation throughout all our programs.

Results

Objective # 1

- to introduce the National Issues Forums concept to all ABE students in our Center throughout the '91-'92 year providing mini-forum experiences for all.

This objective was met throughout the year. All students were given an introduction to NIF's by one of our experienced moderators. After in-class preparation, all students participated in mini-forums.

Objective # 2

- one purpose of the students' involvement in the NIF process will be enhancement of students' critical thinking skills, organizational skills, communication skills, and human relations skills. Enhancement of these skills will 1) improve performance in students' ABE studies and 2) improve retention by fostering commitment and motivation.

We feel strongly that this objective was met. The activities leading up to students' participation in student forums were designed to enhance their skills. Instructors saw noticeable improvement in students' abilities in their ABE studies and with their commitment and motivation.

Pre and post testing on subject content showed more understanding of vocabulary and concepts. Students were enthusiastic and stimulated by course content and participation.

Objective # 3

- to organize 2 student National Issues Forums, one in the fall and one in the spring.

Several student NIF's were held during the year leading up to the two Community Forums held. Students were well prepared for the Forums. The abridged versions of the issue books on "Boundaries of Free Speech" and "America's Role in the World" were used as texts. Kettering's supplemental materials were used as well. Students learned vocabulary and unfamiliar terms associated with both issues. The Student Forums were held on each issue: one for day students and one for night. Classes were combined for the Forums so that even though students were with their regular groups, they were also part of a larger group. This experience provided a good basis for entrance into the Community Forums for some.

Objective #4

- to involve at least 10 ABE students in a Community National Issues Forum.

We more than met this goal. Instead of one Community Forum, we held two. The first, "Boundaries of Free Speech," was held in November. The second, "America's Role in the World" was held May. At both Forums students attended. At the first Forum 11 students attended out of 50 total participants. In May, 6 students attended out of 20 total. Our spring Forum's attendance was down. We feel this was because the subject was less appealing to our community. Response is better for us when the topic seems closer to home. "America's Role in the World" seemed too large a topic although in-class it was successful and at our Student Forum. Also the Forum was later than planned on a beautiful evening in May at a very busy time when people seem to have more commitments.

Objective # 5

- to document this process through a final report which can then be used statewide for a model of National Issues Forums for ABE students.

In addition to the body of this report our hope is that the information in the appendices will be helpful to other practitioners. Also, we encourage other practitioners to contact us for technical assistance in developing NIF activities for their programs.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the project was ongoing throughout the year. All objectives were met within the time frame of the project.

Student and instructor comments best exemplify this project's success:

Students were asked -

What did you find valuable about the NIF exercise?

- *People can have different opinions, discuss them and hash out different beliefs and remain adults. Our world needs help. It could begin with a small group.*
- *I do think I benefited from last week's in-class NIF. I had no idea how much the government was spending on Social Security, Public Assistance and the National Defense. I had no idea the U.S. was the remaining solo-superpower. The choice # 2, 3 and 4 is all new to me. I'm glad I did sit in and listen. Now I'm more aware of what is going on around the world. When people would talk about America's role in the world, I was never interested. Now, I am.*
- *I learned about all of the problems and all that happened in the world. The choices were outstanding. They gave a good detail about what the purpose of them was. I think NIF should be done in schools as well as GED classes. It would help the students understand more about the world and economic and political differences.*
- *Informative on world affairs.*
- *More information on the subjects discussed.*

- *Other people's views.*
- *I learn a lot about the Government I didn't know.*
- *It got me to thinking about politics for the state of the world.*
- *It was helpful for understanding our problems.*
- *To hear the other person's opinion.*
- *About the ways different people feel about the choices.*
- *The freedom to express our thoughts.*
- *That we have control over what we like and want.*
- *Working together with everyone, to me, is valuable and a good learning experience.*
- *It was good to know the way different people feel and why.*
- *Think all of it was valuable.*
- *Appreciating other people's views on the topic.*
- *You learn why some people think the way they do.*
- *How so many other people look at the same issues with different points of view.*

What skills do you feel are improved by participating in a Forum?

- *Listening to others.*
- *Understanding the Government and how it works.*
- *Communication - being open minded.*
- *It might make more people vote to show their opinion.*
- *Speaking, asserting your opinion for what is right.*
- *You get to say your own opinion about the things you want.*
- *Our rights as individuals.*

• *The skill of speaking out, letting people know your opinion.*

• *It made you think of more reasons than just your own opinion.*

• *The skills of really listening and not being afraid to voice an opinion.*

• *Respecting others' opinions, talking out loud with others.*

• *More insights, more talking, more freedom of speech.*

• *More opinions are given, so you have more to think about and decide from.*

• *Thinking, listening and talking skills.*

Did your views on this topic change in any way as a result of the NIF?

• *I became more aware of trade with other nations.*

• *Sometimes you have a black and white viewpoint until you hear other people's opinion.*

• *My views changed somewhat. Hearing different opinions I tend to think differently in some areas.*

• *I learned to be more objective and to try and understand different situations.*

Instructors were asked:

Do you feel that your students have benefited by the in-class and student NIF's?

• *I definitely feel students have benefited by learning to listen to others' opinions, feeling more confident by verbalizing their opinions and good for critical thinking skills.*

• *I believe that students have benefited a lot from NIFs. In fact, Life Skills students have requested that we do more. The "Racism" NIF worked very well. Students were able to look at all angles concerning the Los Angeles riots. They also have gone out on their own to get more information on the subject. A couple people have taped television programs to bring in to share with the class. The NIFs build confidence. Students learn that their opinions count and that they can intelligently discuss subjects that have no easy answers. Because there are no right or wrong answers, NIFs encourage creative thinking.*

• *I think in general the students benefited from the Forums. The in-class forums could have been more effective if the students had been better prepared for the second topic, "America's Role in the New World." This is a very difficult topic for many of our students. However, I think the exposure to different viewpoints is definitely a plus for our students. The first forum, "Boundaries of Free Speech" went extremely well. There was a high level of student participation both in-class and during the community forum. I think the main things the students learned were:*

1) *Their voice counts*
2) *It's okay to have opinions*
3) *Other people's opinions are important, too*
4) *New ways of looking at issues*

• *The students that I spoke to since the "in-class" forum felt that they heard some interesting facts.*

What feedback have you received from students who attended a Community Forum?

- *The students at the Community Forum enjoyed it but were more verbal at the student one.*

- *Our students who participated in the first Community Forum had great things to say about their experience. They were excited that "important" members of the community were there and that they had just as much of a stage as these "important" people did.*

What specific activities/materials did you use with students to prepare them for NIF?

- *Students "brainstormed" their ideas on vocabulary and then were given "book definitions." This alone initiated a lot of discussion. Students viewed the video and we read the book together.*

- *We distributed the materials and let everyone read it on his/her own. Then when we got everyone together on the day of the NIF, we began by splitting the group into three smaller groups and having them discuss the vocabulary. The key to this was that they did the vocabulary without the aid of a dictionary. The purpose was to have them begin the discussion and get the feeling for the "common ground" idea with the vocabulary. It worked like a charm! Excellent; very successful!! Because the students had already spent time together discussing the vocabulary and were, in effect, "warmed up" to the whole idea, the class discussion was tremendous. Once we brought the entire group back together, we went over the vocabulary first and then proceeded with*

the rest of the discussion. Virtually everyone participated and the discussion was great!

• *Vocabulary preparation was the main tool in both forums, although I think we, as instructors, did a much better job with the first topic preparation wise. The Life Skills participants were especially well prepared.*

What benefits to you personally have you received from the NIF experience?

• *I personally find the NIFs very stimulating and enjoyable. I have been more verbal also.*

• *In any instruction setting, I always grow a little bit both professionally and personally. I am the kind of person who learns from my students. Their insight into the issues discussed at the NIF was interesting and informing. Learning from the students is one way that keeps teaching fresh and exciting. I never tire of that! New perspectives always add new meaning!!*

• *NIFs have been among my most enjoyable teaching and learning experiences at the Adult Center. It is important to look at all sides of the issues. The NIFs inspire students to seek out more information and to continue learning.*

• *Personally, I have grown a lot through the NIFs. One, during both forums I was pleased at the depth of opinions that our participants had. Especially with the last topic "America's Role," I assumed that it would be too much for some of our participants to handle. I was wrong. They articulated their views clearly and had some well thought out positions. I have learned to give my students more credit. Assuming that a*

forum will be a waste of time because it "may be over our participants' heads" is wrong. Even if they sit and do nothing, they are listening and learning about something new. If they walk out of here thinking about the topic just a little bit, then the Forum has met its purpose. Or better yet, perhaps ignorance about a topic will create a hunger to learn more about it. Lets face it - we, as instructors, or our participants are not foreign policy experts. Yet we all have opinions. I think one of the participants during the in-class forum (when talking about the United Nations) kind of summed up my view of the NIF:

> *"Even if the United Nations never accomplishes anything - at least they are talking.... and isn't that better than not talking?"*

I am very enthusiastic about NIF Forums and look forward to doing more in the future.

Dissemination

This project will be available for dissemination through:

Bureau of Adult Basic & Literacy Education Programs
Pennsylvania Department of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

and

AdvancE
Pennsylvania Department of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

Specific questions should be directed to:

Carol Molek
Adult Education and Job Training Center
1020 BelleVernon Avenue
Lewistown, PA 17044
(717) 248-4942

Conclusions/Recommendations

"National Issues Forums in an ABE Setting" was a highly successful project. The activities generated added a new dimension to our ABE program. Students benefited by participating in a group learning process and by improving their critical thinking skills. Instructors benefited by further recognizing the potential of their students.

A further benefit of this project was integrating NIF training into other areas of our programming. SPOC students and participants of our New Choices program (single parents/displaced homemakers) eagerly joined ABE classes during student forums. This benefitted everyone involved. By enlarging the ABE classes for these events, ABE students became involved in a larger experience than only relating to their ABE classmates. For students who were not ready to join in the Community Forum, this class expansion provided an excellent next step. Also, as a result of our in-class success with NIF instruction, we brought this curriculum to the Mifflin County Jail and incorporated it into our ABE program there. This was extremely successful. Inmates at the jail had been reluctant to participate in ABE classes. The NIF experience provided an excellent recruitment tool for us and greatly improved overall enrollment at the jail.

As a result of our NIF activities this year, we would strongly recommend that other programs adopt this exercise into their curriculum. Locally, we will continue sponsoring student and

community forums as part of our standard curriculum. Even without additional supportive funding we will make the extra effort needed to continue this valuable program.

National Issues Forums in an ABE Setting

Summary: NIF Activities for ABE Students

Summary: NIF Activities for ABE Students

Adapted from:

National Issues Forum Literacy, Program Resource Kit,

Georgi & Loegering

Building inferences through cartoons and pictures

Discuss illustrations and political cartoons to stimulate critical thinking. Discuss literal and implied meanings.

Making inferences through graphs and charts

Graphs and charts act as catalyists for questions involving literal, inferential, and applied levels of comprehension.

Generating questions to expand higher order thinking skills

When discussing one of the choices on a particular issue, critical thought processes can be stimulated by encouraging students to formulate questions that may be answered as they read.

Looking at the situation, defining the problem and finding solutions

A block diagram works well to sort out and organize information.

Mapping information to explain the choice

For students who respond well to visual learning ideas, abstract ideas can be more clearly understood if mapping techniques are used. Reading graphs and charts may be easier to read than the text.

Organizing information into pros and cons

When reading choices help students develop a list of pros and cons. Students find this exercise relatively easy and helpful.

Providing students with guidance and silent reading

Instructors supply students with questions and specific details to look for in the reading

Simplifying the choices

Even in the abridged editions, sometimes choices need to be broken down into more simplistic language.

Simplifying statistics

Some students need to have larger numerical figures explained to them.

Language experience

Review language experience writing process with students. Have students write language experience story about the issue. Share in a group.

Audio tapes

Record issue materials for the non-reader. Prefice with pre-listening activities.

Journal writing

Assign directed journal writings on aspects of the issues.

Group process skills

An important exercise to use before students participate in an in-class or community forum. Students should generate their own rules through class discussion.

Example: Listen to each other. One person speaks at a time.

Post writings

Have students reflect on their NIF experience in a writing exercise. How have their ideas changed? What did they learn? Comments on the group process. Viewpoints on the issue: supporting their ideas with facts.

For our next Forums:

Penny
Randy
Barb
Kelly
Stacy

dict 12/19/91

11-6-91

CLOSING THE FORUM/STUDY CIRCLE OR HARVESTING THE PARTICIPANTS'S PUBLIC VOICE

If you do not have time to read this material on a DYNAMITE WAY TO CLOSE YOUR FORUM/STUDY CIRCLE (about 4 pages), allow me to bring one item to you attention. The participants at the Summer Public Policy Institutes in San Diego, Davis, California, and Vassar found a tool that was very helpful in closing their forums/study circles in a satisfying way. I don't know why it works so well, but it does. (See chart at end of this piece.)

For a number of years many convenors/moderators have been trying to find a way to close their forums/study circles so that participants have a sense of closure. Forums/study circles are hard work so after the hard work of deliberation the participants naturally want to harvest what they have produced. If choice work (deliberation has taken place, your harvest will consist of statements that illustrate the participants' PUBLIC VOICE.

You can close your forums/study circles in a satisfying way rather than waiting until all the pre- and post-ballots are received and then tabulated in Dayton. This tabulation of ballots does not take place until March or April. It is from your ballots that we are able to develop "A PUBLIC VOICE" summary. You can develop statements at the end of your forums/study circles which are PUBLIC VOICE statements. The participants see what they have accomplished before they leave the room.

Think of your forums/study circles this way. During the study circle you have been talking as a community. You have considered possible options/choices; considered what one would be willing to give up as well as what one would gain; understood why members of your community are so strongly attached to certain options — why they would choose one option over another; have thought about possible unanticipated consequences; and have listened to each other so well they could make a case for all the options.

When this type of conversation takes place the public voice of the community begins to emerge. Depending on the time spent together and the issue under discussion, at the end of the conversation most will be able to articulate areas of agreement, areas of disagreement, areas where more time was needed, and new thoughts and insights.

Also, the size of the group very much influences the nature of the conversation. Large forums are experiences of strangers talking to strangers, exchanging views and values. In the forums one experiences unexpected points of view, unexplored values, and unfamiliar experiences.

Study circles are often an ideal place for serious deliberation. The study circle lends itself to working through and the making of judgments.

Harvesting or closing your forum/study circle is just a written record of what happened.

Of course, if deliberation did not take place then little harvesting can be expected.

Some of the best harvesting conversations take place as a group reflects on the nature of the study circle or forum in which they just participated. Ask, "How does the converation you

have just had compare with most other political conversations in which you have either participated or which you have observed? Has it revealed things that you don't usually hear in other political conversations?"

Reflection on practice leads people to a conversation about the unique information that was produced in their study circle. They will come to see how important it is to understand the values and concerns — both distinct and shared — that underlie each others' positions. And they will realize how different this information is from that provided by experts, policymakers, and the media. People find it refreshing to discover that together they can create a particular form of knowledge about policy issues that is not reflected in the traditional public policy debates.

This approach also encourages people to discuss among themselves why they are engaged in this work, to talk about what they want to accomplish in the shared enterprise of a study circle. This reflection on practice will reveal for the group just how important it is to identify those "Uncertain — To Be Worked Out" items on parts of the conversation.

An attempt to identify the "Uncertain — To Be Worked Out" items should encourage participants to identify not only the trade-offs they are willing to live with, but also those about which they **cannot** make up their minds. It might also encourage the group to review how facts were used in the study circle and to name the collection of facts they think they still need in order to more fully work through the issue.

Other questions that turn the conversation toward developing a public voice are:

> What are the trade offs that this group has identified that they are willing to give up?
>
> What are the things that this group has identified that they would not give up?
>
> Given that each of us has a somewhat different personal perspective on the problem, can we restate it in a way that takes account of each of our perspectives?
>
> What are the understandable concerns we have about the consequences of resolving this issue one way rather than another? What are the downsides to each of the choices open to us?
>
> Given that each of us is motivated by things we attach great importance to, can we redescribe the issue in a way that highlights what each of us values? What are the things we care about deeply that pull us in different directions, that make this such a hard choice? What are the values we believe a widely accepted public policy ought to respect as far as possible?
>
> What consequences do we consider unacceptable? Are there ways of resolving the issue that we can reject because the consequences are unacceptable?
>
> Is there any general way of proceeding that would address everyone's most serious concerns and protect the things we care about most deeply?
>
> Is there a range of actions we all might be able to live with, even if they are not ideal from our personal point of view? Could we all go along with some actions, and rule out others?

Each study circle is a small, but essential, part of a much larger NIF conversation. To create a national version of a public voice, whatever happens in their conversation will eventually need to be integrated with hundreds of other conversations throughout the country.

Not all issues demand the same sort of choice framework. Different issues and different choice frameworks will result in a variety of forms of harvesting. You won't be able to reach the same sort of closure on each issue.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF HARVESTING STATEMENTS?

Each issue will produce a different kind of public voice. Depending on the issues you harvest you may develop:

statements that guide policy;
statements about the nature of conversation;
statements about how the public talks about the issue; and
statements about values.

Lets look at some examples:

ABORTION ISSUE

On the abortion issue you reported that citizens welcomed an opportunity to talk about these issues in a comparatively non-polarized environment. It makes sense that this kind of reporting will be more important for some issues than for others. You reported a public voice that stated a distinct direction — however gently you may have phrased it — that NIF participants "favored policies that would make certain that personal choices were not made lightly." But most of our reporting on this issue entailed a description of the public's characterization of the issue, that is, what kind of issue it is: one that forces us to make a distinction between personal beliefs and sound public policy; one that presents a moral dilemma; one that encourages people to identify and "make conherent" the value tensions between them. The reporting of the public voice on abortion seemed to be more about the kind of conversation the public wants to have than about specific policy direction.

RACIAL INEQUALITY

The type of harvesting and reporting on the racial inequality issue was very similar to that on abortion. You emphasized the way forum participants redefined the issue. You pointed out that citizens recognize a dilemma that is more complex than that defined in the rhetoric of our nation's elected officials and interest groups. You also reported that people discussed the issue not "so much in racial terms as they did in economic terms."

BOUNDARIES OF FREE SPEECH

I suspect that the Boundaries of Free Speech issue public voice will be statements about values in conflict. From the several Forums/study circles I have observed, the citizens seem to be saying, (1) "Some lines need to be drawn, but how do we determine where to draw the line and who should draw the line?" (2) "On the other hand, I value freedom of expression and am unwilling to have this freedom eroded." (3) "At this point, I am willing to live with the conflict of the two values."

ENERGY OPTIONS

Of course, until all the Forums/study circles are held, one can only make guesses about the public voice. From my observations I think you will harvest statements about direction and courses of action. These will be more specific statements. Here are examples of what I have heard in several study circles:

"Considering fossil fuels, we recognize we are living on borrowed time."

"Any conversation options must deal with the fairness issue. Fairness can be accomplished through economic rewards and punishments."

"Nuclear — the current lighwater reactors are not acceptable because of the possibility of accidents, amount and level of waste, and storage concerns. The present pollution of fossil fuels is more acceptable than continuing with the lightwater reactors. We are open to considering the sodium-cooled integral fast reactors. The new technology of integral fast reactors may make nuclear more attractive."

"Government policy is inadequate in the promotion of renewable energy sources."

These were a few statements that the study circle members harvested as their public voice.

One of the members challenged the group and said, "These are just motherhood and apple pie statements and they mean nothing." The group did not agree and suggested, for example, that they could have stated: "Reality demands that in order to look out for our self-interest we must move forward and develop our present nuclear program."

Another example they gave was, "When push comes to shove, our best bet is continued development of our fossil fuel reserves."

"Renewable energy sources in the foreseeable future is not realistic."

They felt that these were examples of a possible public voice that would have led in a totally different direction.

So, for these participants their public voice statements were real. They rejected labeling them as motherhood and apple pie.

Harvesting is not an "add-on," but is as essential a part of the NIF process as is working through each of the choices. It is important for a study circle to reflect on the nature of the conversation in which they have just participated, focusing in particular on how it compares to other forms of political discourse. Also, we should not be shy about trying to identify the categories of information and general direction outlines on the following chart.

A number of convenors have found the following an excellent way for the participants to capture their Public Voice. The moderator displays the chart on poster paper or a chalkboard and encourages the participants to contribute statements for each column. (You may, of course, modify the chart for your group.)

Statements about Direction/Courses of Action That Most of Us Can Live With	Areas of Disagreement	Dilemmas or Hard Choices We Are Not Able to Resolve At This Time. Uncertain/ To be Worked Out	New Thoughts and Insights

P.S. SINCE THIS WAS WRITTEN, SEVERAL CONVENORS DISPLAYED THE CHART AT THE START OF THE FORUM/STUDY CIRCLE. THEY STATED THAT AT THE CLOSE THE FORUM/STUDY CIRCLE PARTICIPANTS WORKED TOGETHER TO COMPLETE THE CHART. THE CHART WOULD THEN REFLECT THEIR PUBLIC VOICE.

National Issues Forums in an ABE Setting

Resources

Resources

All materials from Study Circles Resource Center

P. O. Box 203, Rt. 169, Pomfret, CT 06258

(203) 928-2616

especially: 1) Election '92 Discussion Set

Topics: - The Health Care Crisis in American

- Revitalizing America's Economy for the 21st Century

- Welfare Reform: What Should We Do for Our Nation's Poor?

- The Role of the United States in a Changing World

2) Public Talk Series

Topics include - The Death Penalty in the US

- American Society & Economic Policy - What Should Our Goals Be?

All Kettering Foundation Materials

especially: The Issue in Brief (short summary booklets on each topic)

Publicity Guide Packet for NIF Convenors

All Abridged Issue Books - we used these for <u>all</u> participants of Community Forums, not just for ABE students. The general consensus was that in our hurried times the abridged editions are quick, easy to read and yet thorough.

Hard Choices - An Introduction to NIF by McAfee, McKenzie, Mathews

National Issues Forums Moderator's Guide "Supplemental Materials for Moderators and Teachers" for each abridged edition, produced by the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy for National Issues Forums; 100 Commons Road, Dayton, Ohio 45459-2777, 1-800-433-7834

National Issues Forums Literacy Program Resource Kit by Georgi & Loegering

The Humanities and the Art of Public Discussion, Vol. 3, by Francis, Oswald, Hoff, Gladish, Schwartz, and Hirschbiel; Federation of State Humanities Councils, Washington, DC.

National Issues Forums in an ABE Setting

Pre and Post Forum Ballot

Pre-Forum Ballot
America's Role in the World: New Risks, New Realities

People get involved in National Issues Forums partly because they want leaders to know how they feel about the issues. Each year, NIF reports what you say to local and national leaders. Please answer the questions below BEFORE you read this book.

1. Here are some arguments for and against Choice #1. Do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Agree	Disagree	Not Sure
a. The U.S. should work to promote democracy and human rights around the world.	☒	☐	☐
b. The Soviet Union may be less of a threat. But there are other dangers. So, for now, we must keep our military strong.	☒	☐	☐
c. The Cold War is over. We do not have to be the world's policeman anymore.	☐	☒	☐

2. Here are some arguments for and against Choice #2. Do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Agree	Disagree	Not Sure
a. When no single country in a region is too strong or too weak, this is called a balance of power. History shows that this is the best way to maintain peace in the world.	☐	☐	☒
b. We should try to work with other countries, like China, even if they violate human rights.	☐	☒	☐
c. It is immoral to work with countries that violate human rights. This may seem helpful for now. But it will work against the U.S. in the long run.	☐	☐	☒

3. Here are some arguments for and against Choice #3. Do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Agree	Disagree	Not Sure
a. The U.N. is better at settling conflicts and keeping peace than any single country acting alone.	☐	☐	☒
b. The U.S. is part of a world economy. So we must work with other countries to promote peace rather than acting on our own.	☒	☐	☐
c. The U.S. acted on its own when it bombed Libya and invaded Panama. We must be able to do this, even if the U.N. objects.	☐	☒	☐

(over)

4. Here are some arguments for and against Choice #4. Do you agree or disagree with these statements?

	Agree	Disagree	Not Sure
a. Communism is no longer a threat. Europe and Japan should pay for their own defense now. They should not depend on the U.S.	☐	☐	☒
b. We have many problems in this country. These include poverty, the environment, drug abuse, and the national debt. Problems at home threaten the U.S. much more than problems from outside.	☐	☐	☒
c. The U.S. cannot afford to turn its back on the rest of the world. We depend on other countries for trade and resources such as oil. We must stay involved to protect our interests.	☒	☐	☐

5. Here are some choices about maintaining U.S. military strength. Give your first choice a "1." Give your second choice a "2." Give your third choice a "3." Give your last choice a "4."

	Rank 1 to 4
a. Keep military strength and defense spending as it is now.	3
b. Cut military strength and spending a little. But we must stay strong enough to deal with problems like the Persian Gulf crisis.	1
c. Cut U.S. military strength and spending quite a bit. Help make the U.N. stronger. Then the world community can deal with problems like the Persian Gulf crisis.	2
d. Cut military strength and defense spending a lot. Our most pressing need is to deal with problems at home.	4

6. Which of these age groups are you in? Under 18 ☐ 18-29 ☒ 30-44 ☐ 45-65 ☐ Over 65 ☐

7. Are you a ☐ Man or a ☑ Woman

8. What is your ZIP CODE? 17063

Please give this form to your Forum leader. Or mail it to
National Issues Forums, 100 Commons Road, Dayton, Ohio 45459-2777

Post-Forum Ballot
America's Role in the World: New Risks, New Realities

People get involved in National Issues Forums partly because they want leaders to know how they feel about the issues. Each year, NIF reports what you say to local and national leaders. Please answer the questions below AFTER you read this book.

1. Here are some arguments for and against Choice #1. Do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Agree	Disagree	Not Sure
a. The U.S. should work to promote democracy and human rights around the world.	☒	☐	☐
b. The Soviet Union may be less of a threat. But there are other dangers. So, for now, we must keep our military strong.	☐	☐	☒
c. The Cold War is over. We do not have to be the world's policeman anymore.	☒	☐	☐

2. Here are some arguments for and against Choice #2. Do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Agree	Disagree	Not Sure
a. When no single country in a region is too strong or too weak, this is called a balance of power. History shows that this is the best way to maintain peace in the world.	☒	☐	☐
b. We should try to work with other countries, like China, even if they violate human rights.	☒	☐	☐
c. It is immoral to work with countries that violate human rights. This may seem helpful for now. But it will work against the U.S. in the long run.	☐	☐	☒

3. Here are some arguments for and against Choice #3. Do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Agree	Disagree	Not Sure
a. The U.N. is better at settling conflicts and keeping peace than any single country acting alone.	☒	☐	☐
b. The U.S. is part of a world economy. So we must work with other countries to promote peace rather than acting on our own.	☒	☐	☐
The U.S. acted on its own when it bombed Libya and invaded Panama. We must be able to do this, even if the U.N. objects.	☒	☐	☐

(over)

4. Here are some arguments for and against Choice #4. Do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Agree	Disagree	Not Sure
a. Communism is no longer a threat. Europe and Japan should pay for their own defense now. They should not depend on the U.S.	☑	☐	☐
b. We have many problems in this country. These include poverty, the environment, drug abuse, and the national debt. Problems at home threaten the U.S. much more than problems from outside.	☑	☐	☐
c. The U.S. cannot afford to turn its back on the rest of the world. We depend on other countries for trade and resources such as oil. We must stay involved to protect our interests.	☑	☐	☐

5. Here are some choices about maintaining U.S. military strength. Give your first choice a "1." Give your second choice a "2." Give your third choice a "3." Give your last choice a "4."	Rank 1 to 4
a. Keep military strength and defense spending as it is now.	1
b. Cut military strength and spending a little. But we must stay strong enough to deal with problems like the Persian Gulf crisis.	4
c. Cut U.S. military strength and spending quite a bit. Help make the U.N. stronger. Then the world community can deal with problems like the Persian Gulf crisis.	3
d. Cut military strength and defense spending a lot. Our most pressing need is to deal with problems at home.	2

6. Which of these age groups are you in? Under 18 ☐ 18-29 ☐ 30-44 ☑ 45-65 ☐ Over 65 ☐

7. Are you a ☐ Man or a ☑ Woman

8. What is your ZIP CODE? 17044

9. If you could send our elected leaders ONE message about America's role in the world, what would it be?

Please give this form to your Forum leader. Or mail it to
National Issues Forums, 100 Commons Road, Dayton, Ohio 45459-2777

Post-Forum Ballot
The Drug Crisis:
Public Strategies for Breaking the Habit

Now that you have had a chance to read the book and discuss the drug crisis with others, we'd like to know how you feel about the issue. Please fill out this second ballot.

---

1. What has happened to the ***nation's*** drug problem in the past five years?

   ☒ It has worsened. ☐ It is about the same. ☐ It has improved. ☐ I am not sure.

---

2. What has happened to ***your community's*** drug problem in the past five years?

   ☒ It has worsened. ☐ It is about the same. ☐ It has improved. ☐ I am not sure.

---

3. Here are some plans to use in fighting drugs. How do you feel about them?

	Favor	Oppose	Not Sure
a. Give aid to South American and Asian farmers to help them stop growing drug crops (even if costs U. S. taxpayers).	☒	☐	☐
b. Punish South American and Asian countries that don't help us stop drugs (even if it makes them angry and pushes them toward communism).	☒	☐	☐
c. Step up border patrols to stop drugs (even if it is very expensive).	☒	☐	☐
d. Use the military to patrol our borders and enforce drug laws (even if it means they need new equipment).	☐	☐	☒
e. Add to police forces so they can arrest more drug dealers (even if other people quickly become dealers).	☐	☒	☐
f. Let the police search homes without a warrant if they think the people are dealing drugs (even if homes of innocent people are sometimes searched, too).	☒	☐	☐
g. Arrest and punish small-time drug dealers (even if we must build more prisons).	☒	☐	☐
h. Use the death penalty for dealers who are responsible for drug-related murders (even if many people oppose capital punishment).	☒	☐	☐
i. Ask private companies to give drug tests to their employees (even if many people feel that drug tests are an invasion of privacy).	☒	☐	☐

(over)

	Favor	Oppose	Not Sure
j. Have tougher punishment for *all* drug users (even if this means prison and fines for many more people).	☒	☐	☐
k. Have drug treatment for anyone who wants and needs it (even if it is very expensive).	☒	☐	☐
l. Make marijuana legal (even if this seems to say that some drugs are okay).	☐	☒	☐
m. Make cocaine and heroin legal but control their use (even if this leads to more use of drugs and more addiction).	☐	☒	☐

4. Here are four different plans to fight illegal drugs. Rate each one from 1 to 7 — "1" means it would not help very much — "7" means it would be very helpful.

   a. Stop drugs at their source.
      - 7 Destroy crops.
      - 7 Punish countries that produce and sell drugs.
      - 7 Give aid to South American and Asian farmers who stop growing drug crops.

   b. Get tougher on U.S. drug dealers.
      - 4 Increase police patrols.
      - 7 Search homes and vehicles.
      - 7 Have tougher punishments for dealers.

   c. Stop drug users.
      - 7 Have tougher punishments for users and have drug testing in schools and businesses.
      - 7 Increase drug treatment programs and increase drug education programs.

   d. 1 Make drugs legal and regulate their sale to adults.

5. Which of these age groups are you in? ☐ Under 18 ☒ 18-29 ☐ 30-44 ☐ 45-64 ☐ Over 65

6. Are you a ☒ man or a ☐ woman?

7. What is your ZIP code? 17603

8. As you read the book and talked with others, you may have changed your ideas. How, if at all, did you change your ideas?

9. If you could send our elected leader ONE message about the drug crisis, what would it be?

   Get more education programs, crake down on users.

Please hand this ballot to the Forum leader at the end of the session. Or mail it to National Issues Forums, 100 Commons Road, Dayton, Ohio 45459-2777.

Pre-Forum Ballot
The Drug Crisis:
Public Strategies for Breaking the Habit

One of the reasons people attend the National Issues Forums is to let leaders know how they feel about the issue. To help us do this, please fill out this ballot. It should be done BEFORE you read this booklet or attend the Forum.

---

1. What has happened to the ***nation's*** drug problem in the past five years?

☑ It has worsened. ☐ It is about the same. ☐ It has improved. ☐ I am not sure.

---

2. What has happened to ***your community's*** drug problem in the past five years?

☑ It has worsened. ☐ It is about the same. ☐ It has improved. ☐ I am not sure.

---

3. Here are some plans to use in fighting drugs. How do you feel about them?

	Favor	Oppose	Not Sure
a. Give aid to South American and Asian farmers to help them stop growing drug crops (even if costs U. S. taxpayers).	☑	☐	☐
b. Punish South American and Asian countries that don't help us stop drugs (even if it makes them angry and pushes them toward communism).	☑	☐	☐
c. Step up border patrols to stop drugs (even if it is very expensive).	☑	☐	☐
d. Use the military to patrol our borders and enforce drug laws (even if it means they need new equipment).	☑	☐	☐
e. Add to police forces so they can arrest more drug dealers (even if other people quickly become dealers).	☑	☐	☐
f. Let the police search homes without a warrant if they think the people are dealing drugs (even if homes of innocent people are sometimes searched, too).	☑	☐	☐
g. Arrest and punish small-time drug dealers (even if we must build more prisons).	☑	☐	☐
h. Use the death penalty for dealers who are responsible for drug-related murders (even if many people oppose capital punishment).	☑	☐	☐
i. Ask private companies to give drug tests to their employees (even if many people feel that drug tests are an invasion of privacy).	☑	☐	☐

(over)

	Favor	Oppose	Not Sure
j. Have tougher punishment for *all* drug users (even if this means prison and fines for many more people).	☑	☐	☐
k. Have drug treatment for anyone who wants and needs it (even if it is very expensive).	☑	☐	☐
l. Make marijuana legal (even if this seems to say that some drugs are okay).	☑	☐	☐
m. Make cocaine and heroin legal but control their use (even if this leads to more use of drugs and more addiction).	☐	☑	☐

4. Here are four different plans to fight illegal drugs. Rate each one from 1 to 7 — "1" means it would not help very much — "7" means it would be very helpful.

   a. Stop drugs at their source.
      - 1 Destroy crops.
      - ___ Punish countries that produce and sell drugs.
      - ___ Give aid to South American and Asian farmers who stop growing drug crops.

   b. Get tougher on U.S. drug dealers.
      - ___ Increase police patrols.
      - ___ Search homes and vehicles.
      - 2 Have tougher punishments for dealers.

   c. Stop drug users.
      - ✓ Have tougher punishments for users and have drug testing in schools and businesses.
      - ___ Increase drug treatment programs and increase drug education programs.

   d. ___ Make drugs legal and regulate their sale to adults.

5. Which of these age groups are you in? ☐ Under 18 ☑ 18-29 ☐ 30-44 ☐ 45-64 ☐ Over 65

6. Are you a ☑ man or a ☐ woman?

7. What is your ZIP code? 17044

Please hand this ballot to the Forum leader at the end of the session. Or mail it to National Issues Forums, 100 Commons Road, Dayton, Ohio 45459-2777.

National Issues Forums in an ABE Setting

News Article

The Article below was brought in during our Community Forum by an ABE student. The Forum was "America's Role in the World" and the student remembered reading this article in class. During the Forum, she found the article and used it to support one of her opinions. This incident exemplified that 1) we often underestimate our student's abilities to deal with subjects of global importance and 2) this student's confidence had grown tremendously by her participation in this process.

Budget cutters in for 'most difficult

By Richard Wolf
USA TODAY

When the House's "college of cardinals" convenes behind closed doors this week to carve up the 1993 budget pie, they may resort to prayer.

The purveyors of popular domestic programs are victimized by rising deficits, expanding benefit programs beyond their control, and their own past bookkeeping gimmickry.

For the first time in at least a decade, the "cardinals" — chairmen of the Appropriations Committee's sub-panels that control programs subject to annual review — may have to cut below prior-year levels.

That could spell trouble for programs ranging from the $8.3 billion supercollider to helping the poor pay fuel bills.

"It's going to be the most difficult year that we have ever had," says Rep. Bob Traxler, D-Mich., chairman of a panel that controls housing, environment, veterans and space programs.

Shrinking domestic spending
Congress has discretionary spending power over only about $225 billion in domestic programs in President Bush's proposed 1993 budget. That is up from $215 billion this year, but is less than the $232 billion needed to keep pace with inflation. Where the money goes:
(In billions)
Defense¹ $291.6
Discretionary domestic spending $224.7
Entitlement programs $694.8
Federal debt interest $213.8
Other $91.8
Total: $1.52 trillion
1 – Includes Department of Energy and other defense-related spending
Source: Office of Management and Budget; Congressional Budget Office
USA TODAY

Under the 1990 deficit-reduction law, separate caps were placed on domestic, defense and foreign aid portions of the budget through the 1993 fiscal year beginning Oct. 1.

Since that time, budget analysts have warned that without alterations, the coming year's caps would bite hardest. While the $225 billion ceiling for domestic programs is $10 billion above the current year, gim micks used to make past bud ets fit now conspire to wipe ou that gain — and more.

Regardless of factors such a inflation, population increase and changes in eligibility, a propriators warn, the pr grams face an average 2% r duction below 1992 levels.

"Some way, everybody's g to be squeezed worse," say Rep. Neal Smith, D-Iow whose panel oversees cor merce and crime programs.

Unaffected by the belt-tigh ening are benefit program such as Social Security, whe fast growth is adding to th pressure to save elsewhere.

Other pressures:

▶ Congress rejected earli this year one solution to the d mestic squeeze — an amen ment to the 1990 deal th would have knocked down t "wall" between defense a domestic programs. That re dered the elusive "peace di dend" off limits.

▶ Lawmakers this we

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National Issues Forum in an ABE Setting

Student Questionnaire

NATIONAL ISSUES FORUM QUESTIONNAIRE

You recently participated in an exercise on National Issues Forums. Please complete the following questionnaire to give us some information about this experience.

1. What did you find valuable about the NIF exercise?

2. What skills do you feel are improved by participating in a forum?

3. What did you not like about the Forum?

4. Before the Forum, did you read the preparation material? Yes No

5. Did you find the material helpful? Yes No

6. Did you view the starter tape? Yes No

7. Did you find the starter tape helpful? Yes No

8. Did your views on this topic change in any way as a result of the NIF?
   Yes No

How so?

9. Did you feel your moderator kept the group on target? Yes No

10. Would you like to participate in another in-class mini forum on another topic?
    Yes No

11. What topics do you think would make good Forums?

12. Would you like to be a moderator? Yes No

13. Do you plan to attend our Community Forum on Wednesday, November 13 at 7 p.m.? Yes No

14. We'd appreciate any other comments you may have _____

_____

_____

We'd really like you to come - Wednesday, November 13, 7 p.m. "Boundaries of Free Speech: How Free Is To Free?"

Thanks for your input!

NATIONAL ISSUES FORUM QUESTIONNAIRE

You recently participated in an exercise on National Issues Forums. Please complete the following questionnaire to give us some information about this experience.

1. What did you find valuable about the NIF exercise?

2. What skills do you feel are improved by participating in a forum?

3. What did you not like about the Forum?

4. Before the Forum, did you read the preparation material? Yes No

5. Did you find the material helpful? Yes No

6. Did you view the starter tape? Yes No

7. Did you find the starter tape helpful? Yes No

8. Did your views on this topic change in any way as a result of the NIF?
   Yes No

How so?

9. Did you feel your moderator kept the group on target? Yes No

10. Would you like to participate in another in-class mini forum on another topic?
    Yes No

11. What topics do you think would make good Forums?

12. Would you like to be a moderator? Yes No

13. Do you plan to attend our Community Forum on Wednesday, May 20 at 7 p.m.? Yes No

14. We'd appreciate any other comments you may have _____

_____

_____

We'd really like you to come - Wednesday, May 20, 7 p.m. "America's Role in the World: New Risks, New Realities."

Thanks for your input!

National Issues Forum in an ABE Setting

Publicity

Freedom Of Speech Is NIF Topic

By Elizabeth Coyle

"Congress shall make no law... abridging the freedom of speech ..."

So powerful are the words of this author. Our forefathers were often lauded for their insight in the writing of the Bill of Rights. They ensured citizens of the United States of America important of basic rights but also left room for interpretation.

The topic of the second annual National Issues Forums sponsored by the Mifflin Juniata Adult Literacy Coalition promises to raise some questions and some ire to the Juniata-Mifflin Vocational-Technical School on Wednesday, Nov. 13 in the library at 7 p.m. the public is welcome to attend.

The NIF provides a format in which members of a community can express opinions to issues that Supreme Court Justices decide in landmark cases.

The issue for this NIF is "The Boundaries of Free Speech —How Far Is Too Far?" Where does America draw the line on freedom of speech, a right guaranteed by the First Amendment? Should anyone be allowed to say anything, no matter how vulgar, how offensive, how hateful the message is? Or, how much do we want the government, at any level, to restrict our right to voice opinion?

The National Issues Forums are based on the model of the American town meeting. At forums, citizens present opinions on the issue in considering a broad range of policy choices, examine the likely consequences of and underlying values behind each option and seek common ground.

NIF is funded by the Kettering Foundation, located in Dayton, Ohio. Each year, the NIF identifies three issues of pressing national concern for discussion in forums or study circles. Beginning in the fall, each local study circle addresses one, two or all three of the issues.

For instance, the three choices for debate in the "The Boundaries of Free Speech" are:

1, "Clear and Present Danger: The case for Legal Sanctions." "Clear and present danger" has been used at the U.S. Supreme Court level. It was first introduced by Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes in 1919 and then in 1949 when Justice William O. Douglas overturned a conviction in which a denounced Catholic priest who delivered a speech inside a hall denouncing "Zionist Communistic Jews" while a riot from his protestors raged outside the hall. He was convicted for inciting a riot. But Douglas stated that "speech is nevertheless protected against censorship unless shown likely to produce a clear and present danger."

The rioters should be punished, yes, not the deliverer. If violent reaction could stop demonstrations, blacks and whites demonstrating in the 1950s and 60s may not have brought about Civil Rights Reform.

> **"Speech is nevertheless protected against censorship unless shown likely to produce a clear and present danger."**
> **— Justice William O. Douglas**

2, Self-imposed restrictions: the private sector solution. A Brown University student was recently expelled from school for leveling racial and homosexual slurs on campus during a drunken episode. So, letting private institutions decide what is acceptable may be the best way to reflect community standards. In many cases, what the community finds to be offensive is the best gauge as to what is acceptable.

Some record stores banned record albums covers of questionable content. What about the content of the album itself; organizations have formed to fight for record-labeling in the recording industry. Louisiana Governor Buddy Roemer said, in his veto of a record-labeling bill, "in a free American, where speech is constitutionally protected, the best method of informing the public is through voluntary compliance with industry standards, similar to what the movie industry has done."

3, First principles and free expression: more speech, not enforced silence. "The price we pay for freedom of expression," said Danny Goldberg, chairman of the ACLU Foundation in Southern California and manager of rock music acts, "is that some things will be considered vile by some people." But aren't there studies proving the availability of pornographic material, for example, causes crime, violent crime? Is freedom of speech open-ended? Is there any responsibility that comes with freedom and rights?

The input from local forums is forwarded to the NIF which will in turn prepare an annual report summarizing the thoughts from forums across the country. This report is studied by legislators and presidential advisors at the national level.

The NIF also tackles "hot potato" issues like the public debt, coping with AIDS, the environment at risk, energy options and the battle over abortion.

The purpose of a National Issues Forum is not to come up with answers to the issues of today but to present a format in which every person can voice his or her opinion. Cooperation and participation are stressed in order to encourage an open exchange of views and an understanding of the trade-offs and values connected with each approach to the issue.

For more information or to reserve a spot, contact Carol Molek or Adele Craig at 248-4942.

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Forum At Vo-Tech

Observer - 11/13/91

Free Speech Is Hot Topic Wednesday

Area citizens have the opportunity to relive the experience of a town meeting on Wednesday, Nov. 13 from 7-9:30 p.m. at the Juniata/Mifflin Area Vocational Technical School when they meet to help shape public policy on the issue: "Boundaries of free speech: How free is too free?"

The forum, sponsored by the Mifflin-Juniata Literacy Coalition and the National Issues Forum is free and open to the public. Issue books, offering choices for discussion, are prepared jointly by two non-partisan research foundations, the Public Agenda Foundation and the Kettering Foundation. The NIF does not take a position on public issues but encourages people to come together to express their views, listen to others and, if possible, seek a common understanding. The outcome of these forums are shared with local, state and national policy makers.

Suzanne Fisher, project facilitator for the Adult Education and Job Training Center and moderator for the NIF mini-forum, said it gives people a chance to absorb other new ideas as well as present their own.

"Sometimes hearing someone else's point of view helps you to understand your own opinion better," noted Fisher. "It's more than a bull session."

Just like the old town meeting, people from all walks of life join together and work through an issue leading to a better understanding and more creative solutions to public policy matters.

Fisher noted that freedom of speech is very timely as the nation celebrates the bicentennial of the Bill of Rights.

She noted that the idea of the forum is not to arrive at conclusions or answers to the questions but to cause more thought about it.

"You hope to have people stirred so they leaving feeling uneasy," Fisher added.

To help you become better informed, booklets are available at the forum.

Forum on free speech this Wednesday

Sentinel - 11/11/91

LEWISTOWN — Is free speech an absolute right, or does the right to say, sing, write or draw what you want end where it bumps up against someone else's sensitivities?

Should we limit free speech to acceptable expression? If so, what is acceptable and who decides?

Two hundred years after the Bill of Rights was added to the U.S. Constitution, a debate is taking place about the meaning of free speech and the boundaries of acceptable expression.

At a forum entitled "The Boundaries of Free Speech: How Free is Too Free?" area residents will have the opportunity to address this issue.

The forum — sponsored by the Mifflin-Juniata Adult Literacy Coalition and the National Issues Forums and open to the public — is 7-9:30 p.m. Wednesday at the Juniata-Mifflin Counties Area Vocational-Technical School. Admission is free.

To learn more about this issue, call 248-4942 for a free booklet or pick one up at the Adult Education and Job Training Center, 1020 Belle Vernon Ave., Lewistown.

Forum participants will examine three choices for shaping public policy on this issue:

- Advocates of the first choice believe words and images that are obscene, hate mongering, or an inducement to violence pose a real danger and must be curbed.
- Advocates of a second choice agree about the threat but believe sensible limits should be enforced by private institutions and not government.
- Advocates of the third choice believe speaking freely is the cornerstone of liberty and freedom of expression should be abridged rarely, if at all.

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Residents Discuss U.S. Policies In National Issues Forum

By Elizabeth Coyle

The concensus from the latest National Issues Forum is that the United Nations should take a more prominent role in the world and the United States should take more interest in its own people.

The National Issues Forum, "America's Role in the World," sponsored by the Adult Education and Job Training Center and the Mifflin-Juniata Adult Literacy Coalition, didn't provide solutions for the new problems the world faces in light of a quickly changing political climate but it did give its participants a chance to sound off.

The National Issues Forum is funded by the Kettering Foundation. Each year, the NIF identifies three or four issues for discussion in the forum which cover the most controversial topics from year to year: abortion, remedies for racial equality, AIDS, the public debt and crime, to name a few.

Moderators Randy Varner and Kelly Barron led the discussion which is guided by a study book. The book offers four possible choices or viewpoints that can be considered in a discussion of U.S. policy now that the "Cold War" is over. With the Soviet Union now a matter of history, the battle between the superpowers seems to have ended.

The first policy choice presented concerning the topic "America's Role in the World" suggests that world stability can be maintained best if the United States, as the lone "Superpower" in the world, should continue to show strength and to police aggressive rulers. The war in the Persian Gulf was an excellent example of how the United States led an attack to control the aggression of Iraqi ruler Saddam Hussein.

But many in the local NIF grop disagreed with this. "If we try to bully people," commented Gary Gill, "I think in the long run, that'll backfire on us."

The danger, said one participant, is that the U.S. will be counted on to do what is morally right. Some agreed with the war in the Persian Gulf and others protested against it.

"I was really pumped and excited about it," commented Stuart Cilo, local attorney, of the Gulf war, "but when I thought about it — it wasn't right." He admitted being "glued to the television" but in the end thought sending the troops was wrong.

The consensus of the group was that the military should be cut back. Each of the members said, studying a pie reflecting the defense budget, currently 40 percent of the nation's budget, that they would trim the military.

Choice Number 2 says that the United States should work to make sure no one country is stronger than another; that a balance of power will prevent one country from invading another.

"I think it's too hard to do," commented Varner. "I think this has been (U.S.) policy in the Middle East and it went awry."

That problem, said Dehra Shaffer, assistant director for educational services at WPSX, is because the region has always been tied to the American economy because of oil. She pointed out that if the United States could develop alternative energy sources, oil would be less of a concern. "If we had a national energy policy, we wouldn't need a Middle East policy," she said.

Some disagreed with the suggestion that the U.S. should manipulate other countries. The U.S. backed Kuwait, many point out, because of oil, and not so much because Hussein was too aggressive. The U.S., after all, did support Hussein during Iraq war with Iran just a couple years earlier. Of course, Americans learned that the U.S. was also supporting Iran at the same time. Was this another attempt at trying to maintain balance?

> **"If you start creating opportunities for countries to interact with their economies, there is just less chance that people will go to war with each other."**
>
> **Dehra Shaffer, WPSX**

The group seemed to agree with policy Choice 3, which suggests that the U.S. work with many countries to make the globe more secure. Because the economies of the world are more intertwined, and because of the formation of many new countries, organizations like the United Nations should take the lead in global peace.

Again, Shaffer noted that a world economy will make war econmically the wrong choice: promoting economic interaction keeps the world more peaceful. "If we encourage it, promote it, one nation wouldn't attack another. If you start creating opportunities for countries to interact with their economies, there is just less chance that people will go to war with each other," Shaffer reasoned.

The most favored policy choice, however was the fourth. This suggests that the United States of America needs to concentrate on what happens at home.

At the end of the evening, the group wrote a letter to President George Bush, stating that the Lewistown NIF wanted more of a "financial commitment" to the U.N. and international cooperation. They also wanted Bush to cut the defense budget "by at least half" and instead give money for housing, jobs, medical care and educational opportunity for everyone in the country "not at the expense of the environment."

The National Issues Forum, receives support from the Pennsylvania State University Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, which rewrites the material published jointly by Kettering and Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company for literacy classes. A video, produced by WPSX, and audio cassettes accompany the study book.

The NIF participants each filled out a pre-forum and post-forum ballot asking them about their beliefs on the topic. This input is gathered by the Kettering Foundation and may end up in front of legislators and policymakers across the country.

The local NIF has also addressed the topic "Youth at Risk" and "The Boundaries of Free Speech."

The fourth local NIF will be held next fall. Anyone may attend at no cost and be a part of the forum, which is an informal exchange of views, a sort of "town meeting.

FORUM FOR AN EVENING — The TIU Adult Education Center and Job Training Program sponsored the third National Issues Forum at the Juniata-Mifflin Vo-Tech School, to address the issue "America's Role in the World: New Risks, New Realities." (L-r) Gary Gill and Penny Willard listen to the discussion as Carol Molek (far right), coordinator of adult education at the center, offers comments.

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 Ed-cover - 11/13/91

Bulletin Board

EX-POWS--The Central Penn Chapter of Ex-POWs will meet November 14 at the Golden Corral Steak House at 6 p.m. All ex-POWs and their spouses are welcome. (11-13)

GED TESTING will be held Wednesday, November 20 from 6-10 p.m. and Saturday, November 23 from 8 a.m.-2 p.m. at the TIU Adult Education and Job Training Center. Number of participants is limited. Registration is required. Call the Adult Education and Job Training Center at 248-4942 for more information or to register. (11-13)

ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES: Basic skills brush-up or GED preparation begins November 18. Register now! Books and classes are free. Classes meet part-time days or evenings at the Adult Education and Job Training Center, Juniata-Mifflin Area Vo-Tech School. Small group or one-on-one instruction. Call 248-4942 for more information. (11-13)

SCHOOL RETIREES--The Mifflin County Association of School Retirees will have a noon luncheon at the Holiday Inn on Friday, November 15. Call Ruth Wolfe, 248-1662, with your reservations by Tuesday, November 12. (11-13)

CLERICAL SKILLS--PreVocational clerical skills training program at the Adult Education and Job Training Center starts soon. Learn basic skills in clerical setting. Hands on computer experience. Week days. Enrollment limited. Call 248-4942 for eligibility. (11-13)

CHICKEN CORN SOUP SALE--St. Mark's Episcopal Church will sell chicken corn soup Friday, November 15. Soup will be ready by 11 a.m. — bring your own container. To order, call 248-6512 or 248-8327. (11-13)

BOUNDARIES OF FREE SPEECH: How Free Is Too Free? Community Forum, everyone welcome. Free material can be picked up at the Adult Education and Job Training Center, 248-4942. Sponsored by the Mifflin-Juniata Adult Literacy Coalition. (11-13)

GOLDEN AGE MEETING--The Golden Age Club meeting will be held Thursday, November 14 at 2 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church, North Dorcas Street, Lewistown. Sign-up for Christmas party December 12. Visitors and new members welcome. (11-13)

A local look at the nation

About 15 people gathered at the Adult Education Center, Lewistown Heights, Wednesday night for the third local National Issues Forum. "We had a very lively forum," said Carol Molek, adult education coordinator. The main thrust of the forum was "America's Role in the World: New Risks, New Realities." Those gathered discussed four different options about the nation's role in relation to the world. Molek said they're planning another forum for next year, possibly looking at national health care issues.

Sentinel photo by JASON MINICK

Sentinel 5/12/92

Tuscarora Intermediate Unit
Adult Education and Job Training Center

CAROL MOLEK
Adult Education Co-ordinator

ADELE T. CRAIG
JTPA Director

Press Release: Week of 4/27/92

Community Forum on America's Role in the World

For more than 40 years, the guiding principle of U.S. foreign policy was the need to prevent the spread of Soviet-sponsored communism. Today, that principle is no longer relevant. Dramatic changes have turned the former Soviet Union and its satellite states in Eastern Europe into potential partners.

Over the next few years, the United States will have to make decisions about the circumstances under which it might act overseas to defend national interests, about how it should relate to other nations, and what threats pose a real danger to America's national security. Only after these crucial questions have been resolved, will it be possible to decide how large our armed forces should be and what we should do to protect our interests and preserve the peace.

The public voice gives a sense of direction or purpose to a community or government. It articulates a community's values and sets the boundaries within which political actions can expect a degree of public support But the public voice can only emerge when we provide an opportunity for people to come together.

Local citizens are providing just that kind of opportunity by sponsoring a National Issues Forum (NIF) on "America's Role in the World." National Issues Forums are based on the model of the American town meeting; citizens inform themselves and each other, consider a broad range of policy choices, examine the likely consequences of each option, identify the values underlying each choice, and seek common ground. Locally sponsored National Issues Forums are being held throughout the nation.

NIF identifies four major choices in the new foreign policy debate. Each has distinctive strengths and abilities. By encouraging discussion informed by a clear sense of the options, their cost, and the trade-offs they impose, NIF can help move the public toward a common understanding about what America's global role should be. When this year's cycle of Forums is completed, NIF will hold a series of meetings with peoole who directly shape foreign policy to tell them what the public voice has to say.

Our local National Issues Forum, "America's Role in the World: New Risks, New Realities," will be held at the Juniata-Mifflin Area Vo-Tech School, Adult Education Center on Wednesday, May 20 at 7 p.m.

Booklets on the issue may be borrowed from the Adult Center. Call 248-4942 for more information.

The Forum is sponsored by the Mifflin-Juniata Adult Literacy Coalition.

Juniata-Mifflin Vo-Tech School (717) 248-4942 | 1020 BelleVernon Avenue (717) 242-1423 | Lewistown, PA 17044 (717) 248-8610 FAX

TIU 11 is an equal rights and opportunities educational service agency.

Adult Literacy Coalition

Press Release: Week of 11/4/91

National Issues Forum Next Week!

Area citizens have the opportunity to relive the experience of a town meeting when they meet on Wednesday, November 13, 1991, from 7:00 PM - 9:30 PM at the Juniata/Mifflin Area Vocational Technical School to help shape public policy on the issue: "Boundaries of Free Speech: How Free is Too Free?"

The forum, sponsored by the Juniata/Mifflin Literacy Coalition and the National Issues Forum (NIF) is free and open to the public. Issue books, offering choices for discussion, are prepared jointly by two non-partisan research foundations, the Public Agenda Foundation and the Kettering Foundation. The NIF does not take a position on public issues but encourages people to come together to express their views, listen to others and if possible seek a common understanding. The outcome of these forums are shared with local, state, and national policymakers.

Just like the old town meeting, people from all walks-of-life join together and work through an issue leading to a better understanding and more creative solutions to public policy matters.

To help you become better informed, booklets have been prepared. To pick up your free copy and sign up for the forum, visit the Adult Education and Job Training Center at 1020 Belle Vernon Avenue, or the Job Center at 21 South Brown Street, or call 248-4942 for more information.

Adult Literacy Coalition

County Observer - Bulletin

Please run this on 10/29, 11/4, and 11/12.

Thank you!

"Boundaries of Free Speech: How Free Is Too Free?" Community Forum, everyone welcome. Free material can be picked up at the Adult Education and Job Training Center 248-4942. Sponsored by the Mifflin-Juniata Adult Literacy Coalition.

Adult Literacy Coalition

Mifflin-Juniata

Adult Literacy Coalition

Press Release: Week of 10/21/91

Community Forum on Free Speech

Is free speech an absolute right, or does the right to say, sing, write, or draw what you want end where it bumps up against someone else's sensitivities? Should we limit free speech to acceptable expression? If so, what is acceptable and who decides?

Two hundred years after the Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution, a conscientious debate is taking place about the meaning of free speech and the boundaries of acceptable expression.

At a forum entitled "The Boundaries of Free Speech: How Free is Too Free?" sponsored by the Mifflin/Juniata Adult Literacy Coalition and the National Issues Forums (NIF), area citizens will have the opportunity to address this issue of national and local significance.

The forum to be held between 7:00 PM and 9:30 PM on Wednesday, November 13, 1991, at the Juniata-Mifflin Area Vo-Tech School is free and open to the public.

To learn more about this issue, interested persons should call 248-4942 to receive their free booklet.

Forum participants will examine three options for shaping public policy on this issue:

Advocates of the first choice believe words and images that are obscene, hate mongering, or an inducement to violence pose a real danger and must be curbed.

Advocates of a second choice agree about the threat but believe sensible limits should be enforced by private institutions and not government.

Speaking freely is the cornerstone of our liberties, advocates of a third choice believe, and freedom of expression should be abridged rarely, if at all.

By expressing our views and listening to the opinions of others, we begin to shape public policy in the best tradition of our democratic heritage.

The results of these forums held throughout the country will be shared with legislative and executive policy makers.

Participation does not require a great deal of knowledge about this issue. Discussions focuses on helping people sort out conflicting principles and preferences in seeking common ground.

You may pick up the free booklet entitled "The Boundaries of Free Speech: How Free is Too Free?" at the Adult Education and Job Training Center, 1020 Belle Vernon Avenue, Lewistown, or call 248-4942 for more information.

Tuscarora Intermediate Unit
Adult Education and Job Training Center

CAROL MOLEK
Adult Education Co-ordinator

ADELE T. CRAIG
JTPA Director

WMRF-WIEZ; WCHX; WKVA; WJUN; WQJU

Please announce through 5/20/92

A community forum sponsored by the Mifflin-Juniata Adult Literacy Coalition on the topic "America's Role in the World: New Risks, New Realities" will be held on Wednesday, May 20 at 7 p.m. at the Adult Center of the Juniata-Mifflin Area Vo-Tech School. Everyone is welcome. To help participants prepare for the Forum, booklets have been prepared. To pick up a free copy and sign up for the Forum, visit the Adult Education and Job Training Center at 1020 Belle Vernon Avenue, or call 284-4942 for more information.

Juniata-Mifflin Vo-Tech School (717) 248-4942 | 1020 BelleVernon Avenue (717) 242-1423 | Lewistown, PA 17044 (717) 248-8610 FAX

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Tuscarora Intermediate Unit
Adult Education and Job Training Center

CAROL MOLEK
Adult Education Co-ordinator

ADELE T. CRAIG
JTPA Director

TELEMEDIA, TCI CABLE CO.

Please run through May 20, 1992

Community Forum
America's Role in the World: New Risks, New Realities
Wednesday, May 20, 1992
7 - 9:30 p.m.
Adult Education and Job Training Center
Call for free issue booklets and information
248-4942

Juniata-Mifflin Vo-Tech School 1020 BelleVernon Avenue Lewistown, PA 17044
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Tuscarora Intermediate Unit
Adult Education and Job Training Center

CAROL MOLEK
Adult Education Co-ordinator

ADELE T. CRAIG
JTPA Director

Press Release: Week of May 11, 1992

National Issues Forum Next Week!

The third local National Issues Forum will take place Wednesday, May 20 at 7 p.m. at the Adult Education Center of the Juniata-Mifflin Area Vo-Tech School, in Lewistown. Subject for the Forum is "America's Role in the World: New Risks, New Realities." The public is encouraged to attend this chance to share opinions and ideas. The Forum is structured like an old town meeting. People from all walks of life join together and work through an issue leading to a better understanding and more creative solutions to public policy matters. The forum, sponsored by the Juniata-Mifflin Literacy Coalition and the National Issues Forum (NIF) is free and open to the public. Issue books, offering choices for discussion are prepared jointly by two non-partisan research foundations, the Public Agenda Foundation and The Kettering Foundation. The NIF does not take a position on public issues but encourages people to come together to express their views, listen to others and if possible seek a common understanding. The outcome of these forums are shared with local, state, and national policymakers.

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Press Release: Week of 4/27/92

Community Forum on America's Role in the World

For more than 40 years, the guiding principle of U.S. foreign policy was the need to prevent the spread of Soviet-sponsored communism. Today, that principle is no longer relevant. Dramatic changes have turned the former Soviet Union and its satellite states in Eastern Europe into potential partners.

Over the next few years, the United States will have to make decisions about the circumstances under which it might act overseas to defend national interests, about how it should relate to other nations, and what threats pose a real danger to America's national security. Only after these crucial questions have been resolved, will it be possible to decide how large our armed forces should be and what we should do to protect our interests and preserve the peace.

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NIF identifies four major choices in the new foreign policy debate. Each has distinctive strengths and abilities. By encouraging discussion informed by a clear sense of the options, their cost, and the trade-offs they impose, NIF can help move the public toward a common understanding about what America's global role should be. When this year's cycle of Forums is completed, NIF will hold a series of meetings with peoole who directly shape foreign policy to tell them what the public voice has to say.

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Booklets on the issue may be borrowed from the Adult Center. Call 248-4942 for more information.

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Adult Literacy Coalition

TO: Juniata County School District Social Studies Teachers
FROM: Carol Molek, Adult Education Director, Adult Education and Job Training Center, 248-4942

I'm writing as a representative of the Mifflin-Juniata Adult Literacy Coalition to let you know about our upcoming National Issues Forum: "America's Role in the World - New Risks, New Realities." We feel this would be an excellent opportunity for your students to participate in an exciting learning experience.

National Issues Forums are part of a national movement sponsored by the Kettering Foundation to have citizens of a community meet in a format similar to old town meetings to discuss important national issues. NIF does not advocate any specific solution or point of view on public issues, but seeks to provide a means by which citizens can gain an influential role in public policy making. The Forums provide citizens the opportunity to inform themselves on issues, to consider a broad range of policy choices and to meet with each other to identify the concern they hold in common.

The upcoming NIF is the third sponsored by our Coalition. The first two topics were: "Youth at Risk" and "Boundaries of Free Speech: How Free is too Free." Response in the community has been very positive. We feel our current topic will also produce an exciting evening.

Enclosed for your information are:

1) NIF - Forums and Study Circles Guide
2) Summary of the topic, "America's Role in the World"
3) Flyers for the May 20 Forum (please reproduce). In addition, copies of the issue booklet may be borrowed for class use (call 248-4942). The issue books provide detailed analysis of the four choices offered.

We hope you will attend on May 20 and also encourage your students to do so.

Please call me with any questions you may have.

Adult Literacy Coalition

TO: Mifflin County School District Social Studies Teachers
FROM: Carol Molek, Adult Education Director, Adult Education and Job Training Center, 248-4942

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Please call me with any questions you may have.

For more than 40 years, the guiding principle of U.S. foreign policy was the need to prevent the spread of Soviet-sponsored communism. Today, that principle is no longer relevant. Dramatic changes have turned the former Soviet Union and its satellite states in Eastern Europe into potential partners.

Those changes provide the United States and the world with new opportunities for peace. But they do not eliminate other threats to peace in the Middle East, the Third World and, as we've seen in Yugoslavia, even in Eastern Europe.

Over the next few years, the United States will have to make decisions about the circumstances under which it might act overseas to defend national interests, about how it

— more —

should relate to other nations, and what threats pose a real danger to America's national security. Only after these crucial questions have been resolved, will it be possible to decide how large our armed forces should be and what we should do to protect our interests and preserve the peace.

Some people would like those decisions made by a small elite of political leaders. But in order to be successful, any foreign policy must make sense to ordinary people. Democracy depends on the consent of the governed, and it is the *public* that must set the directions of policy for the nation. Jeane Kirkpatrick, former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, says, "We should reject utterly any claim that foreign policy is the special province of special people — beyond the control of those who must pay its costs and bear its consequences."

As U.S. leaders ponder new post-Cold War principles, they need to hear what might be called the "public voice." As opposed to anecdotal information or public opinion polls, the public voice is what people use to describe, explain, and interpret the results of open conversation and deliberation; it's what people think after they've talked it over.

At its best, the public voice gives a sense of direction or purpose to a community or government. It articulates a community's values and sets the boundaries within which political actions can expect a degree of public support. But the public voice can only emerge when we provide an opportunity for people to come together.

Local citizens are providing just that kind of opportunity by sponsoring a National Issues Forum (NIF) on "America's Role in the World." National Issues Forums are based on the model of the American town meeting; citizens inform themselves and each other, consider a broad range of policy choices, examine the likely consequences of each option,

— more —

identify the values underlying each choice, and seek common ground. Locally sponsored National Issues Forums are being held throughout the nation.

NIF identifies four major choices in the new foreign policy debate. Each has distinctive strengths and liabilities. By encouraging discussion informed by a clear sense of the options, their costs, and the trade-offs they impose, NIF can help move the public toward a common understanding about what America's global role should be. When this year's cycle of Forums is completed, NIF will hold a series of meetings with people who directly shape foreign policy to tell them what the public voice has to say.

Here, briefly, are the four choices being discussed:

Solo Superpower: Unilateral Approach to U.S. Security. Those who hold this view argue that America must be ready to act on its own when necessary. It has no choice but to be the world's policeman; no other nation has the economic and military power, the diplomatic influence, and the commitment to human rights and the rule of law. Unilateralists want the United States to advance the cause of freedom at every opportunity by helping democracies and weakening dictatorships. They even support aiding guerrillas fighting dictators.

On a practical level, this approach means that the United States would maintain a military presence in many regions of the world. It could require levels of military spending comparable to those in the Cold War era.

Balancing Act: Prudent Course for the Real World. Sometimes known as the "realist" position, this view holds that while U.S. policy should be guided by self-interest,

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the United States cannot afford to be the world's policeman. It must maintain stability by preserving a "balance of power" among major powers. Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger says this policy "knows few permanent enemies and few permanent friends." A good example of this approach is President Bush's decision to force an Iraqi retreat from occupied territory but not to remove Saddam Hussein from power after the Persian Gulf War. The president wanted to avoid a situation in which Iraq would collapse and Iran or Syria would try to take over.

This view also holds that it is sometimes necessary to form alliances with nondemocratic regimes and to overlook human-rights violations — for example, by maintaining relations with China even after its suppression of democracy. This approach would require continued high military spending, though not as high as would be required by the unilateralist view.

Multilateral Solution: New Rules for Mutual Security. This approach holds that we have unprecedented opportunities for international cooperation and mutual security. Former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance says, "the new world order encourages us to look for solutions that would have been previously impossible." Supporters of this view point to three trends which make it both practical and necessary: the growing economic interdependence of nations; growing support in all corners of the world for democratic ideas and practices; and the emergence of new problems, such as environmental pollution, overpopulation, and Third World poverty, that can only be dealt with through multilateral solutions. This approach sees the United States cooperating with other nations in many areas and multinational organizations, like the United Nations, serving as the world's policeman.

Domestic Priorities: Refocusing on Needs Close to Home. This view holds

— more —

that the end of the Cold War gives the United States a chance to redirect its resources to growing domestic problems that now threaten national security more than any foreign power. Jack Beatty, senior editor of *The Atlantic*, says, "The main threats to our international position are domestic. They are to be found in the debt-ridden condition of the economy and the deteriorating state of so much of our physical and human capital. This is the realm in which we must establish our strength, for it is here that we will be tested in the post-Cold War era."

Virtually no one feels that the United States can entirely abandon its international role. But supporters of this approach argue that America can conduct its business abroad without being a superpower. They say it should not take on any role, including one in a U.N. peacekeeping force, unless the United States is directly threatened.

These four alternatives have different costs, benefits, and trade-offs. The choice is too important to be left to a foreign policy elite.

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National Issues Forum in an ABE Setting

Example: Moderator's Guide

NATIONAL ISSUES FORUMS

MODERATOR GUIDE

1991 - 1992

America's Role in the World: New Risks, New Realities

Welcome to the National Issues Forums (NIF). The Forum/study circle you are moderating is part of a nationwide, nonpartisan program of public discussions. NIF does not advocate any specific point of view on public issues; rather, it is a means by which citizens make choices about the basic purposes and directions for their community and their country. The Forums/study circles provide citizens the opportunity to come together to inform themselves about today's complex public policy issues, consider a broad range of policy choices, and work toward a common ground for mutually acceptable solutions.

THE MODERATOR'S ROLE

As moderator, you don't have to be an expert on the issue being discussed, but you should be the best-prepared person in the room. Most moderators find it necessary to read the issue book more than once and to underline key points. It is important for you to have a clear grasp of the options the issue presents, and of the main arguments usually advanced for and against each option. Also you need to be able to articulate the problem the choice addresses and the solution or policies advocated by the choice.

KNOWING THE ABC'S OF NIF

An effective moderator understands the purpose of public talk; a large part of this understanding comes from knowing the ABC's of NIF. These are a useful set of criteria by which you can judge your own questions and responses during an NIF discussion. For example, "What is your personal preference?" is a poor question for promoting deliberation. The NIF moderator knows that it is necessary to dig deeper, to explore and weigh carefully the views of others and what those views mean to them, in order to achieve public knowledge and public judgment.

While this *Moderator Guide* will contain many specific suggestions for moderating a Forum or study circle, perhaps the most productive advice you could follow is *"Know your ABC's of NIF."*

PREPARING FOR THE FORUM/STUDY CIRCLE

There are certain preparations you should make, and certain supplies you should have on hand, before the Forum or study circle begins:

Materials

Have the videotape in the VCR, ready to go when the time comes. A flip chart and markers may be useful for summarizing points and focusing the discussion.

Advance Preparations

So that participants can readily refer to the choices, which are listed on page 8 of this *Moderator Guide*, you may want to write them on a large poster or make individual copies for each participant. It is also helpful to display a poster on which you

have written the six points of "BE CERTAIN THAT — AFTER OUR FORUM/STUDY CIRCLE, EVERYONE IS ABLE TO:" found on page 4 of this guide.

SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR AN NIF FORUM OR STUDY CIRCLE

Every NIF gathering is unique; in fact, the materials are designed for flexibility. However, most Forums and study circles follow a general format:

Welcome

The convenor or moderator introduces the NIF program.

Pre-Forum Ballot

All participants fill these out before the discussion begins.

Opening

The starter video/ icebreaker sets the tone for the discussion.

Working Through/ Deliberation

Participants examine all the choices.

Closing/Harvesting a Public Voice

The moderator helps participants gain a sense of closure.

Following are descriptions of each portion of the suggested NIF format:

Welcome

Let the participants know who is sponsoring the Forum/study circle. When several organizations or groups are involved, stress co-sponsorship. Make any necessary introductions. Briefly describe the NIF program, explaining that NIF is a way of talking about difficult public issues, and of communicating a public voice to policymakers. Review with the participants "BE CERTAIN THAT — AFTER OUR FORUM/ STUDY CIRCLE, EVERYONE IS ABLE TO:" found on page 4.

Pre-Forum Ballots

Have everyone fill out the pre-Forum ballots before you begin the discussion. Explain that they are a way to get everyone focused on the issue and a way for individuals to check their own feelings about the issue. (Some participants who have already read the issue book may have filled out the pre-Forum ballot ahead of time.)

Opening

It is strongly recommended that you use the discussion starter videotape. The tape presents in a straightforward manner each of the choices for considering the issue, laying the groundwork for an open, fair-minded conversation. (See instructions in the issue book for information on ordering the tapes from Kendall/ Hunt Publishing Company.) You may also want to use an icebreaker to establish a friendly, informal atmosphere and help participants to personalize the issue. For example, you might ask, "Has anyone had an experience involving this issue, or know of someone else who has?" You might also ask, "How have you seen this issue affecting our community?"

Working Through/ Deliberation

During the Forum/ study circle, the conversation should focus on the choices. It is important for you to make sure that participants consider the pros and cons of ALL choices, even if at the outset everyone agrees that a particular choice has little or no merit.

One moderates a Forum/study circle as if there is work to be done. And that work is DELIBERATION.

Following are some general questions you might use to facilitate deliberation. More questions, specific to the individual issues, appear later in this *Moderator Guide*.

Questions for Facilitating Deliberation

- How do we make a choice when we might not know the consequences of the choice?
- How did you deal with the conflict between _____ and _____?
- You indicated you wanted to take all these actions, but if push came to shove, what would you do?
- Why do you feel that way?
- What would be your priorities?
- What are the consequences of that choice on all the citizens?
- Could you tell me a story to illustrate that?
- How would someone make a case against what you just said?
- What might that mean in your life?
- I understand you do not like that position, but for the person who holds it, what do you think they deeply care about?

- What is your criteria for judging?
- Are there choices we have not considered?
- Can you tell us why one might feel the way they do about this choice?
- How does your position relate to the things you care about most deeply?
- What are the uncertainties that are inherent in the choice? What is your primary concern? What aspects of the issue are most important to you?
- How do we arrive at what we want to do?
- What is there about this choice you just cannot live with?
- If one holds that position, what are the gains and what does one give up?
- Think about the consequences of what you said such as _____. Does that make a difference?
- If we followed this course of action what would be the consequences of that action on your life? Other lives?
- How do you separate what is a private matter and a public matter on this issue?
- How does your statement deal with the equity question?
- Would that position increase or decrease the long-term use?
- What might be the results of your ideas on others?
- Do you think we could live with the actions in the long term?
- Would you review the pros and cons of the choice for us? What are the uncertainties you have?
- Would someone identify the values that seem to be clashing? What is really happening here?
- How might your concerns differ if you were poor, wealthy, an employee in an affected industry, a government official, a resident of a particular area, etc.?

Closing/Harvesting a Public Voice

It is the moderator's responsibility to pull the group together at the end of the program. As with any discussion, participants should leave with a sense of accomplishment and closure. Following are some suggested questions for helping Forum participants identify the public perspective, public judgment, and common ground they have achieved, and hence to

ABC's of NIF

A Politics requires that we make HARD CHOICES.

These choices touch our deepest political motivations, those things we VALUE most.

B Making choices is difficult; it is CHOICE WORK.

This work requires:

1. PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE, understanding connections, others' perspectives, and the consequences of the options before us.
   — To make choices together there has to be mutual understanding of others and issues.
2. Choice work also requires moving from individual opinions to the more reflective and shared perspectives needed to inform PUBLIC JUDGMENT.

C Choice work is done by:

1. DELIBERATION, talk in which we explore and weigh carefully the views of others and all possible options.
2. WORKING THROUGH, the feelings that come from facing the costs of any decision — and working through the contradictions between what we value and the way we act.

D Choice work results in:

1. A PUBLIC DEFINITION OF THE PUBLIC'S INTEREST, a sense of common purpose.
2. COMMON GROUND, a shared frame of reference or sense of direction that delineates the range of actions the public would support — a basis for giving public direction to governments.
3. A basis for COMPLEMENTARY ACTIONS in a community, actions that are mutually reinforcing because they are guided by a sense of common purpose and direction.

articulate their "public voice" on the issue they've deliberated.

Questions for Harvesting a Public Voice

- Now that we've considered this issue from all sides, how do we see the problem?
- What are the understandable concerns we have about the consequences of resolving this issue one way rather than another? What is the downside to each of the choices open to us?
- Given that each of us is motivated by things to which we attach great importance, can we redescribe the issue in a way that highlights what each of us values? What are the things we care about deeply that pull us in different directions, that make this such a hard choice? What values do we believe a widely accepted public policy ought to respect as far as possible?
- What consequences do we consider unacceptable? Are there ways of resolving the issue that we can reject because the consequences are unacceptable?
- Is there a range of actions we all might be able to live with, even if they aren't ideal from our personal point of view? Could we all go along with some actions, and rule out others?

Once participants have articulated as well as possible a public voice, have them complete their post-Forum ballots. Explain that the ballots will be sent to the National Issues Forums, where they will be tabulated and analyzed along with ballots from around the nation, and the results will be compiled and presented to policymakers.

BE CERTAIN THAT — AFTER OUR FORUM/STUDY CIRCLE, EVERYONE IS ABLE TO:

- ✔ identify the range of realistic alternatives and move toward a choice;
- ✔ make a good case for those positions one dislikes as well as the position one likes, and consider choices one has not considered before;
- ✔ understand others have reasons for their choices and that their reasons are very interesting — not dumb, unreasonable, or immoral;
- ✔ realize one's own knowledge is not complete until one understands why others feel the way they do about the choices;
- ✔ consider the underlying values of each choice; and
- ✔ leave the Forum/study circle "stewing" over the choices. (Sometimes this is called "thinking.")

THE ISSUE — AMERICA'S ROLE IN THE WORLD: NEW RISKS, NEW REALITIES

As the United States moves out of the Cold War period, the guiding principles of our international policies have become less clear-cut. It is no longer sufficient to shape a foreign policy around the single threat of communism. Instead, in shaping our policies in the "new world order," the United States must reconsider what constitutes a threat to our national security.

- **Threat of violence**
  In the post-Cold War era, tensions are most likely to emanate not from superpower confrontations but from civil wars, regional conflicts, ethnic rivalries, and the threat of international terrorism. Do these conflicts in faraway places threaten our national security?
- **Worldwide pollution, overpopulation, and poverty**
  Are the hazards caused by pollution in the United States and other countries, as well as the pressures of overpopulation and extreme poverty in developing nations, matters of more immediate concern to us than the possibility of armed conflict?
- **Economic strength**
  Although the United States is now generally considered the only remaining superpower, that status is less assured now than it was at anytime during the Cold War. Will national security in the 1990s and beyond be determined by a nation's economic strength more than by its military prowess?

THE CHOICES

Once Americans have considered carefully the threats to national security in the post-Cold War world, we must make choices about how best to address these threats. Some citizens believe that exporting democracy and promoting human rights should be the guiding principles of our foreign policy, and that the United States must be prepared to act unilaterally on many occasions. Others, advocates of realpolitik, or political realism, feel that America's overriding purpose should be to protect U.S. interests, not to try to impose our political values on other nations. Still others — multilateralists — are convinced that, in a world where nations are more interdependent than ever, U.S. security depends on the strength, security, and cooperation of all nations. Finally, others argue for domestic strength, under the conviction that the end of the Cold War gives America the opportunity to do what it has always done best — mind its own business and focus on peace and prosperity at home.

This Forum/study circle will consider the choices associated with each of these four views of the United States' place in the "new world order." Following are some questions that, along with the **Questions for Facilitating Deliberation** suggested earlier in this *Moderator Guide*, can be used to facilitate deliberation on each of the choices.

CHOICE #1
Is the United States obligated to play the leading role in the international arena?

The best hope for protecting the peace and for advancing America's interests and its ideals is for the United States to maintain a forceful presence around the globe and be prepared to act unilaterally when necessary.

- Is it sometimes necessary to abandon collective decision making and rely on the firm leadership of the United States, the only remaining superpower?
- Is deterring tyrants and bullies by threatening armed retaliation the best hope for maintaining a stable and peaceful world order?
- Is a request from those who are suffering, sufficient to justify crossing a national boundary without authorization from a nation's leaders? Should the United States support guerrilla forces fighting to overthrow anti-democratic regimes?
- If we insist on freedom of action for ourselves, will other nations inevitably act in a less cooperative way with us?

CHOICE #2
Are regional and global instability the chief problems created by the end of the Cold War?

In a world that is no longer bipolar, it is more important than ever for the U.S. to maintain a balance of power, both in specific regions and in the world as a whole.

- How did the easing of Cold War tensions affect the worldwide balance of power? Why are hostilities more likely to break out when the balance of power between neighboring nations is

uneven or when there is a power vacuum?

- What are some of the unstable situations existing around the world today? How might those situations erupt (or how have those situations erupted) in violence? Could the U.S. do anything to prevent such eruptions?
- Are the compromises on democratic principles such as the ones the United States has made in Kuwait and China acceptable ways to achieve long-term goals? Should America rule out alliances with dictators?
- Is instability in regions or nations necessarily a bad thing? Can anything positive result from such instability, without U.S. involvement?

CHOICE #3
Does U.S. security depend on the strength and security of all nations?

With the world's increasing interdependence, each nation's prosperity helps others to prosper, and no nation is secure unless others are secure as well. In this world, the coordination of relations among nations by international bodies is no longer a utopian dream, but a necessity.

- Can today's world allow a reorganized United Nations to be more effective than it has been in the past? Why or why not? Is it in the United States' interest to devise a strong multilateral security system that makes the U.N. the cornerstone of world security?
- Can a multilateralist approach help nations deal with such troublesome developments as environmental pollution, population pressures, and extreme poverty in Third World nations? If so, how?
- Is it realistic to presume that various nations will perceive challenges to the international order in the same way and favor similar actions in response to those challenges?
- Should the United Nations revise its "principle of national sovereignty," which prohibits the U.N. from intervening in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of an individual state?

CHOICE #4
Should we redefine our priorities for national security and focus on pressing domestic needs?

Real security is determined mainly by a nation's economic strength. For this reason, and because of the end of the Cold War, America should reduce its foreign commitments to the bare minimum and refocus on problems close to home.

- How serious is the problem of "domestic decline" in the United States? To what extent is this decline a threat to America's security and to its influence abroad?
- Have we spent too much on national defense since the end of World War II? Is the high cost of military buildup responsible for our soaring national debt?
- Should we avoid alliances, agreements, and commitments of economic and military resources that are not absolutely essential to America's interests?
- How do we balance the cost of military procurement projects against the cost of deficit reduction, medical insurance for the uninsured, and the building and maintenance of roads, bridges, and schools?

Once participants have addressed each choice, they should have come to a greater understanding of the issue and of the consequences of the various alternatives. Like the **Questions for Harvesting a Public Voice** listed on page 4 of this *Moderator Guide*, those that follow may help you make connections between the various choices, and, in closing the Forum/study circle, to harvest a public voice.

- What should be the United States' national security objectives in the post-Cold War world?
- Under what kinds of circumstances would you be willing to have the United States engage in war?
- Should the U.S. maintain its present level of military presence in Europe? Korea? the Middle East? the Philippines? Africa? Latin America? Why or why not?
- What is currently the major threat to U.S. security?
- Does the U.S. currently hold a disproportionate share of the risk and cost of maintaining world order?
- How does our heavily militarized conception of national security compare to that of our major economic competitors?
- Is the United States still a superpower? How do you define that term?

America's Role in the World: New Risks, New Realities

After the dramatic collapse of the communist regimes of Eastern Europe in 1989, Americans and others around the world began to use the phrase "new world order" to describe the global landscape. Although it is not yet apparent exactly what that new world order is, a redefined role for the United States is clearly called for.

From the end of World War II until very recently, anti-communism was the central principle of American foreign policy. A large U.S. military contingent in Western Europe guarded against the threat of Soviet invasion there; the superpower struggle was invoked to justify American involvement in other nations around the world as well.

As the United States moves out of the Cold War period and into a new era, what principles should guide our global efforts? How should we balance obligations and interests overseas with pressing needs at home? Can we agree on what the most serious threats are to our national security? Although the Soviet threat has receded, the world continues to be a very dangerous place, with tensions now less likely to emanate from superpower confrontations than from civil wars, regional conflicts, ethnic rivalries, and the threat of international terrorism. Worldwide environmental pollution, population pressures, and extreme poverty are other matters of immediate concern, matters that could have profound effects on our national security. Furthermore, our nation's economic strength is an important factor in national security for the 1990s and beyond. Ultimately, the debate over America's global roles and responsibilities begins as a discussion of the threats now facing the United States, and of what "national security" means in the post-Cold War world.

Which threats to national security we view as most pressing will determine our foreign policy goals and our views about America's role in the new world order. What is at issue is a fundamental question: What global role offers the best hope for minimizing risks and maximizing America's opportunities in the post-Cold War era?

To those who feel that the Cold War world has given way to a situation in which the United States is the unchallenged superpower, American strength and will are the best hope for a stable and peaceful world order. Advocates of *realpolitik*, on the other hand, see a multipolar world in which the superpower conflict has given way to dangerous instability in many regions. From this viewpoint, self-interest must guide the U.S. to engage in a global balancing act, using its aid, alliances, and weapons to maintain a balance of power. Still others believe that our national security rests on international cooperation and multinational security forces. From this view, the U.S. now has intensely practical reasons to strengthen the mandate and capabilities of the United Nations. Finally, supporters of a fourth vision of America's global role are convinced that the prospect of armed confrontation among the major powers is so sharply diminished in the new world order that the U.S. can afford to make considerable reductions in its global commitments, and redirect its resources to urgent domestic problems.

As we enter a new era in which global threats to American interests are more diffuse, it is more difficult to achieve a consensus about the worldwide dangers that require our attention and our energies. Ultimately, our elected officials will have to make difficult policy decisions about our role in the new world order, but as citizens we have the responsibility to take part in the discussion that will shape that policy.

CHOICES

Choice #1:
Solo Superpower:
Unilateral Approach to U.S. Security

The post-Cold War world is a dangerous place in which America must be prepared to act alone, if necessary, As the only remaining superpower, the United States is obliged to play the leading role in the international arena.

Choice #2:
Balancing Act:
Prudent Course for the Real World

In a world that is no longer bipolar, it is more important than ever for the United States to maintain the balance of power. America's chief purpose should be to protect its interest, not to follow an ambitious international agenda.

Choice #3:
Multilateral Solution:
New Rules for Mutual Security

Nations are more interdependent today than ever before and none can be secure unless others are secure. The end of the Cold War presents an opportunity to strengthen collective arrangements for resolving conflicts and addressing common problems.

Choice #4
Domestic Priorities:
Refocusing on Needs Close to Home

The end of the Cold War gives America an opportunity to redirect resources to unmet needs at home. Security is determined by a nation's economic strength and its domestic well-being, and it is in these areas that we must now focus our attention.

National Issues Forum in an ABE Setting

NIF 91-92 Issues

NATIONAL ISSUES FORUMS
1991-1992 ISSUES

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Choice #2
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Choice #3
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Choice #4
Energy Conservation: Doing More with Less

THE BOUNDARIES OF FREE SPEECH: How Free Is Too Free?

Choice #1
Clear and Present Danger: The Case for Legal Sanctions

Choice #2
Self-Imposed Restrictions: The Private-Sector Solution

Choice #3
First Principles and Free Expression: More Speech, Not Imposed Silence

AMERICA'S ROLE IN THE WORLD: New Risks, New Realities

Choice #1
Solo Superpower: Unilateral Approach to U.S. Security

Choice #2
Balancing Act: Prudent Course for the Real World

Choice #3
Multilateral Solution: New Rules for Mutual Security

Choice #4
Domestic Priorities: Refocusing on Needs Close to Home

TO RECEIVE SAMPLE COPIES OF ABRIDGED ISSUES, CONTACT CONNIE MICHEL AT NATIONAL ISSUES FORUMS, 100 COMMONS ROAD, DAYTON, OHIO 45459-2777, OR CALL TOLL-FREE 1-800-433-7834.

National Issues Forum in an ABE Setting
NIF Order Form

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